

**THE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA** met in Special Meeting on Monday June 24, 2011 at 12:00 Noon in the Showers City Hall, Parks and Rec Conference Room, 401 North Morton Street, with President David Walter presiding.

## **I. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: David Walter, Elizabeth Kehoe, Jim Muehling, John West, Michael Szakaly and Michael Gentile,

Commissioner(s) Absent:

Staff Present: Lisa Abbott, Bob Woolford, Doris Sims and Janet Roberts

Other(s) Present: Margie Rice, Corporate Counsel; Inge VanderCruysse; Dave Williams, Parks & Rec; Mike Rouker, Risk Management Director

## **II. READING OF THE MINUTES.** – None.

## **III. EXAMINATION OF CLAIMS.** – None.

## **IV. REPORT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

**A. Director's Report.** None.

**C. Budget Summary Report.**

## **V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** None.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. RESOLUTION 11-15: Approval to Expend Thomson Walnut Winslow TIF Funds for the McDoel Switchyard Mast Plan.** Williams explained that in 2003 Parks purchased only the Switchyard corridor and some sections in the switchyard from Grimes Lane to Country Club. Since that time they have purchased 28 acres of switchyard property as well as the abandoned Indiana corridor that runs from Country Club to Rogers. The B-Line runs through the property on the western edge, the balance of the 27 acres to the east of the trail and a 12 acre linear corridor is wrapped together as the McDoel Switchyard master plan study. He stated Parks would like to move ahead with a comprehensive master plan for the property that would consist of quite a few things. The RFQ was sent to the Commissioners prior to the meeting and with their approval they hope to send it out soon. He stated this is a multiple discipline project which will require a lot of study and evaluation.

Williams explained the first master plan was very conceptual and they didn't know then what they know now regarding the constraints of the property including environmental review of the flood way. They have also had to remediate the coal ash and cinder contamination along the trail which was fortunately paid for by an IDEM grant. The ash and cinder has to be dealt with to make the area a safe place for the public. That will be a big issue to be evaluated at in the master plan—they have done many studies and know the extent of the contamination and know what's involved in the remediation.

Williams said there are the typical parks issues, but they are looking at a mixture of activities

including event venues, stormwater management, economic development issues, possible zoning changes, Hillside Drive as a possible thoroughfare from east to west, affordable housing possibilities and evaluation of possible use of nine acres still owned by CSX which is currently under clean up mode. He said this is not a typical parks master plan, this is a very comprehensive land use plan for a 28 acre brownfield that has been abandoned for some time. Williams stated they realize this is an expensive plan. The upward limits are around \$500,000 which is the not to exceed amount they are requesting. This study would include a substantial amount of work with regulatory authorities on the flood way and remediation – they drive everything that would happen on this property, but they think it can be done. Staff wants the RDC involved in the process, public comment from the community, open houses, meetings with neighborhood associations and web based participation.

Williams said noted that Clear Creek is a huge component even though they don't own all of it. This section of Clear Creek is not drainage as is most of Clear Creek north of Grimes. They would like to look at the feasibility of an ecologic restoration of the creek of the areas they currently own and property they may be able to obtain from adjoining business owners on Walnut Street that are in the flood way.

Williams said the study could take up to a year and a half to complete including all the documents and drawings. They want go beyond the conceptual designs with renderings and schematic designs.

Gentile asked if Hillside will be part of the plan. Williams said Public Works would like to see Hillside happen, but if the community and administration don't like any of the ideas that come out of the study they may look for an alternative for an east/west thoroughfare.

Abbott said this project is huge and is made up of many different components from various city departments which is why the cost of the study is so high.

Renneisen said this area has been used for something else for 150 years and they are trying to look ahead to the next 150 years. This is a huge area that it is going to influence the redevelopment opportunities are on all four sides and this is a one time deal – they want to get it right. That's another reason it is so costly.

West asked if all the different aspects of the study will be used or if this is just a chance for a department to "coattail" on the study then shelve it for future use. Renneisen said that has not been the approach in Parks or in any other departments; they see it as a chance to make a change in their respective areas.

Walter suggested that the plan should be updated every three to five years for things such as acquisition of more property. Renneisen agreed that as redevelopment changes happen, they will have to keep looking at the plan.

Williams said they want to formally adopt the recommendations from the study. He said this will be the guiding document for what they are going to do and will contain a certain level of detail as to how they are going to do it.

Walter said the Gross Policy Plan will have to be updated with whatever happens with this study. Abbott said Planning is already discussing updating the GPP.

West asked if \$500,000 is enough to cover the cost of the study. Abbott said they talked with several consultants who thought the dollar figure would cover the cost.

Szakaly asked if the study would be done by a single group. Williams said there would be a lead firm and team members are of great interest to them, but the RFQ states there is to be one person to contact about their submittal.

Gentile asked how much money is in the TIF. Abbot said \$667,905 is available with another \$1.7 million reimbursement from a road project that will be coming from INDOT. Trexler stated another \$1.2 million in revenue will also be received next year, so there is enough to take care of this expense.

Gentile asked if cost estimates for the projects will be included in the study. Williams said estimates will be included. He said there will be a phasing in of the projects based on available funding.

West asked the timeframe for putting out the bid. Williams stated that with RDC approval they will send the RFQ out on July 8, 2011, give them a month to submit, then there will be internal evaluations of the submittals and face to face interviews with the finalists. They look for contract approval in September and give the consultant team the authority to proceed by the end of September. They will then quickly begin the public comment period and public meetings and get some final concepts in the spring. Williams expects to be done with the overall study by late summer next year, but the renderings and costs estimates will take a little longer. They hope the process will not take longer than 18 months.

West said he is concerned that it might drag out and bills might keep coming in. Williams said communications and accountability will be closely looked at when picking the consultant and Departments will be specific about what they want. West asked if Parks would be the point people for the study. Williams said they will be the lead.

Michael Szakaly moved to amend the resolution to state that the Parks Board will manage the study process from here on. John West seconded the motion. Resolution 11-15 was unanimously approved as amended. **ADOPTED.**

**B. RESOLUTION 11-16: Approval to Expend Thomson Walnut Winslow TIF Funds for the HAWK Signal on Country Club Drive.** Williams explained they received a DNR State Trail Grant funding for trail construction in 2009 for \$900,000. They built two trails, one of which was a gravel parking lot on the south side of Country Club which serves as the trailhead for the Bloomington Rail Trail. Currently the Rail Trail and the Clear Creek Trail connect and they are almost ready to connect the B-Line which will add three miles giving them 7.4 miles of connected trail. They don't have an adequate trailhead at Country Club, so the DNR project will almost triple the parking lot size to 23-24 cars. It would be constructed of impervious pavement and have minimal amenities. Walkers and bikers are currently crossing over Country Club to the Clear Creek Trail. The parking lot needs to be bigger and the crossing needs to be safer.

In order to increase the parking lot size and improve the crossing safety at Country Club, they are asking for funding to augment the DNR project funds of \$350,000 to add the HAWK Pedestrian Activated Signal. The HAWK is essentially a larger version of a signalized intersection, however there is no stop light at the location. There are some sight issues and a lot of traffic as it is an east/west corridor. The Traffic Commission has unanimously approved the sign. It goes to the Council in August where it is expected to get approval. He explained that when a group of pedestrians collect at the signal, they push a button which causes a red traffic flasher which stops the traffic and allows the pedestrians to cross -- then traffic to continue. It's has not been done on a major thoroughfare before, but they have talked with Planning, Public Works, the Mayor, the Bike and Ped

initiative and some of the Council members who support the signal. If it's approved tonight and by the Council the Public Works Traffic Division would implement the signal. The City is working towards becoming a Platinum Bike Community by 2016.

Kehoe asked if there was available funding. Trexler stated he was had allowed for this funding expenditure in his TIF balance.

Muehling asked if there is a plan to improve the road from Walnut to Rogers because the traffic backs up in the evenings and mornings. Williams said from the research they've done there is a learning curve involved with this signal, but this is a change that people will to get used to. He said there are not currently any improvements planned in the near future for Country Club. He said the Traffic Division told him the key to making the HAWK work is how they signal the lights at Rogers and Walnut. Muehling asked if an overpass was considered. Williams said not at this time, but that is something that might be considered in the future.

Walter asked if this signal has an audible signal. Williams said he did not know, but he thinks that is probably an option and he would look into it.

John West moved to approve the Resolution. Michael Gentile seconded the motion. Resolution 11-16 was unanimously approved. **ADOPTED.**

## **VII. BUSINESS/GENERAL DISCUSSION.**

**A.** Muehling asked there were any plans to put parking space for the trail at Winslow and High. He explained that people are backing into the traffic circle to exit. Williams said they may have to create a pull off inside the Goat Farm property because people are not using the alternative parking that is available.

**B.** Gentile asked when the bridge over Grimes was going to open. Williams said they have to first pour the concrete deck. INDOT will not inspect the bridge until everything is complete and the contractors have been informed that if they pour the concrete, they will be liable for any damages, graffiti or personnel injuries. Therefore they will not pour the concrete until closer to the end of the project and before the students come back -- probably early August. Gentile also asked about the other sections of the B-Line. Williams said are in the home stretch.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

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David Walter, President

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Michael Gentile, Secretary

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Date

